

REMARKS

Claims 1-36 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action, claims 1-4, 7-10, 12-17, 19-24, 26, 28-29, 31-34, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Bary (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0117893). Claims 11 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Bary in view of Stephens (U.S. Patent No. 6,430,105). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (CCPA 1974). Bary describes a conventional ocean-bottom cable type seismic prospecting method that uses a seismic cable or streamer laid on the sea bottom. See Bary, paragraph [0004]. Bary also describes an alternative seismic prospecting method in which seismic data acquisition units are launched from surface acquisition units and descend through the water column to stick into the sea bottom. The seismic data acquisition units may include inclinometers for measuring their orientation and compasses. See Bary, paragraphs [0008-0009]. However, the seismic data acquisition units described by Bary are not coupled to an ocean-bottom cable. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that Bary fails to teach or suggest at least one orientation sensor coupled to an ocean-bottom cable, as set forth in independent claims 1, 16, 28, and 33. As admitted by the Examiner, Bary also fails to teach or suggest determining whether at least one ocean bottom cable has moved from at least one initial inclination and at least one current inclination, as set forth in independent claims numeral 1, 16, 28, and 33.

Applicants further submit that the prior art of record fails to provide any suggestion or motivation to modify the cited references to arrive at the claimed invention. The Examiner alleges that it would be obvious to use the inclinometer and/or the compass deployed in the

seismic acquisition device to determine if an ocean-bottom cable has moved from one inclination reading to another. Applicants respectfully disagree. First, as discussed above, the seismic acquisition devices described by Bary are not coupled to an ocean-bottom cable. Second, Bary states that the seismic acquisition device should be shaped to descend, under the effect of gravity, to the bottom of the water mass and to enter the bottom so as to couple the seismic receivers with the underground formation. See Bary, paragraph [0029]. Applicants respectfully submit that the person of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the seismic data acquisition device described by Bary is intended to be buried in the sea bottom and therefore would not be expected to move during the seismic data acquisition process and it would therefore be unnecessary to determine whether or not the seismic acquisition device has moved. Thus, Applicants submit that Bary fails to provide any suggestion or motivation for modifying the prior art of record to determine whether at least one ocean bottom cable has moved from at least one initial inclination and at least one current inclination, as set forth in independent claims 1, 16, 28, and 33.

The Examiner relies upon Stephens to describe using an accelerometer to acquire seismic data. However, Stephens fails to remedy the fundamental deficiencies of the primary reference.

For at least the aforementioned reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to make a *prima facie* case that the present invention is obvious over Bary and Stephens, either alone or in combination. Applicants request that the Examiner's rejections of claims 1-4, 7-17, 19-24, 26-29, 32-34, and 36 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

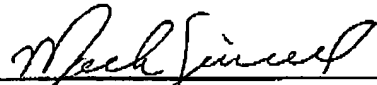
In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 5-6, 18, 25, 30, and 35 contain allowable subject matter but that these claims were objected to as being dependent upon a

rejected base claim. Pursuant to the above arguments, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 5-6, 18, 25, 30, and 35 are in condition for allowance.

For the aforementioned reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all claims pending in the present application are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (713) 934-4052 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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